

MISCELLANEOUS.

HIDALGO AND MORELOS THE FORERUNNERS OF MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE.

To-day hangs over the entrance of the palace of Dictator President Diaz in Mexico City the most sacred church bell of all the myriad church bells of this be-churched country—the sacred bell on which the priest Hidalgo sounded the tocsin of revolution against Spain in 1810. I have been examining a marvellous collection of manuscripts offered to me for three thousand dollars gold, and cheap at the price, were it not for the too obvious evidence that they have been stolen from the secret archives of the Government here in Mexico. One is a holograph letter from Hidalgo to Morelos, explaining the withdrawal of his army after his fight before the Capital, a withdrawal which proved the beginning of disasters which finally cost him his life. Hidalgo here says he did not retreat defeated; far from it. His army of roughly a hundred thousand, mostly pure natives, say Aztecs, on capturing the city of Guanajuato had slaughtered the Spaniards and now again in the fight before the Capital the whole body of Spaniards, estimated at three thousand men, had been killed, only one officer, on horseback, escaping.

Hidalgo says that finding his horde uncontrollable, he feared to trust them in an attack on the great city, and with some idea of training them he deviated from the advance movement.

The idea spread among them that perhaps they had been defeated, and the vast army melted like snow.

Hidalgo was not long after captured, tried, unfrocked, and executed (1811). The hero priest Morelos, after four years of victory, was defeated (in 1815) by Iturbide, who was afterward (in 1821) destined to finish the work of liberation from Spain, when he reigned for a brief space as emperor (1821–1824). Morelos, confined in a corner room of the winter palace of Cortez in Cuernavaca, afterward so dear to Maximilian, was then himself tried for heresy, that he might first be unfrocked and degraded from the priestly office, before suffering death as a traitor. These manuscripts are of historical interest, some contain the original and only record of this strange trial, hitherto an undivulged secret.

Here are all duly recorded the changes, the questions, the answers of Morelos. A few excerpts from these marvellous answers will show the hero wrestling vainly with his fate. "You charge me here," says Morelos, "with disbelief in an actual hell in a future life. Yet further on you equally charge me with maintaining that

the late Pope is burning now in the eternal fires of hell. These two charges contradict each other.

"Again you charge me with being a Lutheran, yet further on you charge me with rejecting the authority of the Bible. These two charges likewise contradict each other, for Luther bases his entire position on the authority of the Holy Scriptures as against the Pope and the Catholic Church."

No wonder it was wished that this trial might be kept secret. Morelos confesses to having hoped for aid from the United States, but says that no such aid came.

The whole manuscript is fascinating. These few lines may be perhaps even now the only part of it which will ever reach the world.

GEORGE BRUCE HALSTED.

CITY OF MEXICO.

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF MATHEMATICS.

The publication of an *Encyclopædia of the Mathematical Sciences, Both Theoretical and Applied*,¹ under the auspices of the Scientific Academies of Munich, Vienna, and Göttingen, is announced by Teubner, of Leipzig. The Encyclopædia is to fill six volumes containing from four to five installments each, published at the rate of one volume a year.

To judge from the character and the number of the collaborators, the work will be a monument of erudition, and will constitute the most complete existing reference work of the mathematical sciences. On its historical, philosophical, bibliographical, and didactic sides also it will be exhaustive, particularly in regard to the developments of the present century (Vol. VI.). The applications of pure mathematics to mechanics, physics, astronomy, geodesy, engineering, and the industrial sciences are to be considered in the fourth and fifth volumes. The first three volumes, which are devoted to pure mathematics, will treat of arithmetic and algebra, analysis, and geometry. The scientific committee to whose charge the execution of the work has been committed are Prof. W. Dyck, of Munich; Prof. G. von Escherich, of Vienna; Prof. F. Klein, of Göttingen; Prof. L. Boltzmann, of Vienna, and Prof. H. Weber, of Strassburg. The editors are Dr. Heinrich Burkhardt, of Zürich, and Dr. W. Franz Meyer, of Königsberg, Prof. A. Schoenflies, of Göttingen, and A. Sommerfeld, of Clausthal.

We are in receipt of the first article on *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, by Prof. H. Schubert, of Hamburg, with whose views our readers are familiar from our mention in the last *Open Court* of his latest English essays² on the same subject. The remainder of the first installment (112 pp.) is taken up by Professor Netto, who writes on *Kombinatorik*, and by Professor Fringsheim, who treats of *Irrational Numbers, and Convergence*.

¹*Encyklopädie der mathematischen Wissenschaften mit Einschluss ihrer Anwendungen. Mit Unterstützung der Akademien der Wissenschaften zu München und Wien und der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, sowie unter Mitwirkung zahlreicher Fachgenossen*, herausgegeben von Dr. Heinrich Burkhardt, O. Professor der Mathematik an der Universität Zürich, und Dr. W. Franz Meyer, O. Professor der Mathematik an der Universität Königsberg i. Pr. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner. 1898.

²*Mathematical Essays and Recreations*. Just published in the Religion of Science Library. Pp. 149. Paper, 25 cents. Cloth, 75 cents.